



Shenandoah Valley born and bred...





like the Valley because it's so peaceful and there is so much to see and there's a lot of history. It's just like living in a magic world. The big trees, just blowing in the wind. The birds, the big grassy meadows with the cows grazing..."

—Emily Greene, age 8, Augusta County





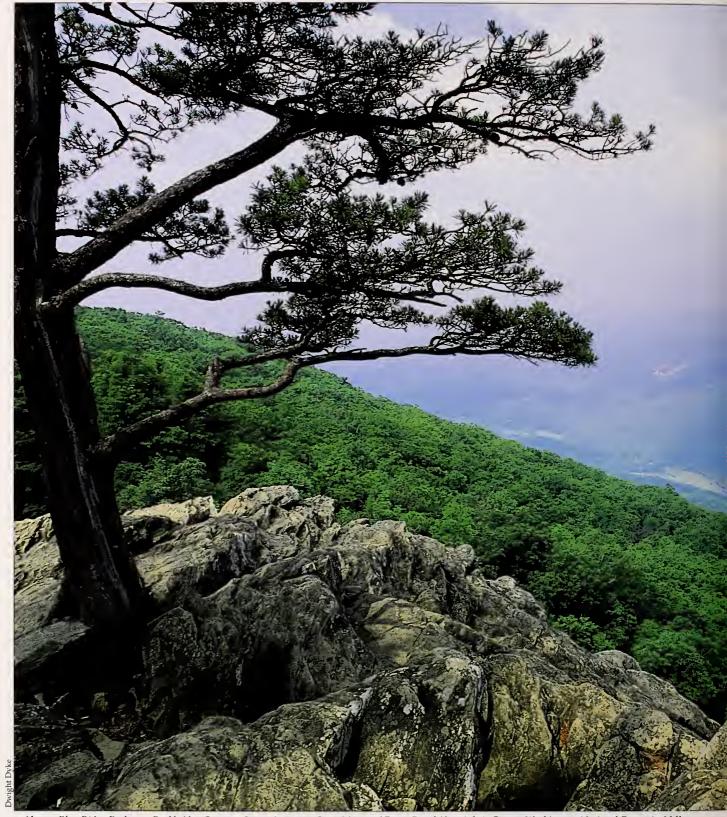


Above: Fall on the slopes of the Blue Ridge. Far left: Late spring in Rockbridge County. Left: Civil War reenactment of the Battle of Cedar Creek, Middletown (Frederick County).

"Jguess not

many places are unsettled like this. Some places are just full of houses."

—Jody Greene, age 12, Augusta County



Above: Blue Ridge Parkway, Rockbridge County. Opposite page: Scott Mason of Front Royal (far right). George Washington National Forest (middle right). Winter near Vesuvius (top right).

here is a certain peace about the mountains. They have a way of making whatever tension, or problems you have seem pretty insignificant."

— Scott Mason, age 38, Front Royal













In the Valley, memories of the Civil War never die and reenactments of famous battles help keep them alive. As a strategic and highly prized region for both the Confederacy and the Union, the Shenandoah Valley was protected by Stonewall Jackson and his forces until his death at Chancellorsville in 1863. In October of 1864, the Battle of Cedar Creek in Middletown (top) resulted in a Union victory which finally placed the Valley of Virginia in Union hands for the rest of the War. Right: The Battle of New Market was fought on May 15, 1864, one-half mile south of New Market to Mt. Jackson. In a grueling 4-day hike from Lexington, 257 Virginia Military Institute (VMI) cadets joined 4,500 Confederate soldiers to stand against a Union force of 6,000, echoing Stonewall Jackson's famous battle cry: "The Institute will be heard from today!" Above: The historic Burwell-Morgan Mill near Millwood (Clarke County).







here were a lot of Civil War battles fought in the area...I would go out with my father and grandfather on days after a heavy rain and we'd walk around some of the fields where we knew there had been battles. And usually in these plowed fields, the rain would wash away a lot of the dirt and you could find bullets. But a lot of that has been paved over and developments put up."

--Scott Mason, Front Royal







was raised on a farm. And we had wheat planted. We'd cut it and put it on shocks...Make hay. We'd have to haul it in the barn."

—Virginia Meyers, age 82, Dayton (Rockingham County)





Opposite top: Augusta County wheatfield.
Opposite far left: Virginia Meyers, Dayton.
Opposite left: Shenandoah Valley hayfield.
This page: C.P. Redifer (top) of Augusta
County pauses to wipe his brow while stacking
hay in his barn. Above and right: Apple
harvest near Mt. Jackson in Shenandoah
County.

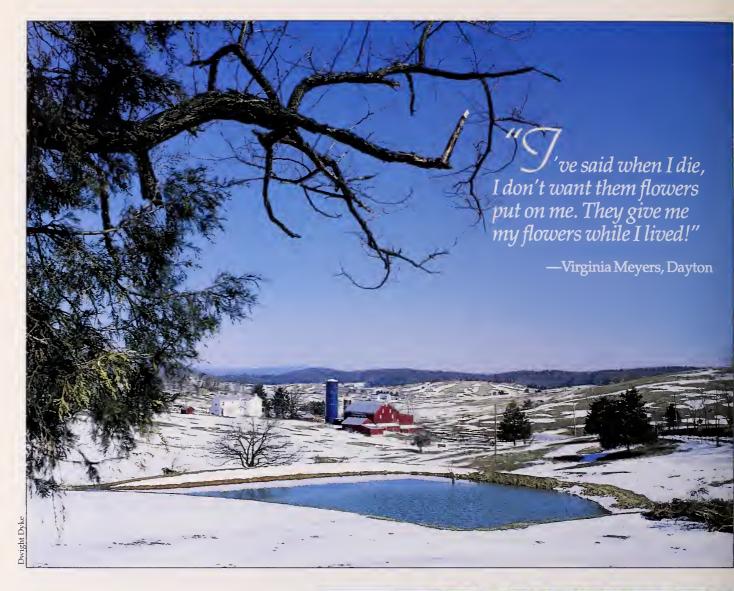


Is a child, we kept cows at home. We'd take the milk and put it down in the cellar to keep it. We didn't have no re-fridg-a-rator. We could kill hogs and kill a beef and hang it out in the smokehouse. Kept it all winter long. Now, by golly, you can't keep it no time. We have funny seasons!"

—Virginia Meyers, Dayton



FEBRUARY 1994 11



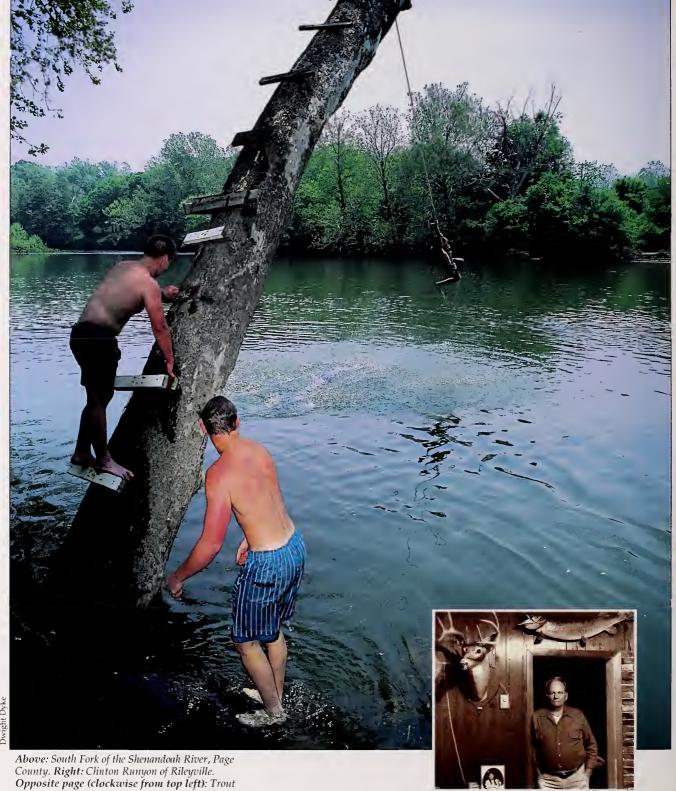
ell, it'd snow kneedeep going to school. I didn't ride the bus. Hee, Hee! I didn't know what that was! We had to walk to school. But we were dressed fer it! We'd have boots on and 'union suits' you called 'em, a big coat, old cap and we were dressed fer it. We was raised with common sense more than some of 'em is now."

—Virginia Meyers, Dayton



Top: Rockingham County in snow. **Above:** Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Mt. Solon (Augusta County). **Opposite:** Middle River near Verona (Augusta County).





Above: South Fork of the Shenandoah River, Page County. Right: Chinton Runyon of Rileyville.

Opposite page (clockwise from top left): Trout fishing in the George Washington National Forest. First pumpkin, first harvest. Augusta County farmland.

14

ack in the Depression, it was rough. My mother would give me a bucket, and when the berries were ripe, she'd say 'don't come home until you fill this bucket.' We grew up hard."

— Clinton Runyon, age 61, Rileyville (Page County)





young days, we'd catch hellgrammites and madtoms and sell them. A lot of days we'd make ourselves about twenty bucks in a few hours in the morning. Then we'd catch enough madtoms for ourselves, we'd fish the rest of the day. So we grew up as river rats."

— Clinton Runyon, Rileyville



Derivabe Ded

was the first one to see the wildflowers when they started out in the spring and throughout the summer. I always stopped and bent down and looked at these things. I enjoyed it, because to me, all of it is a miracle. It's beyond our understanding, we can't even comprehend it...I can't."

— Clinton Runyon, Rileyville

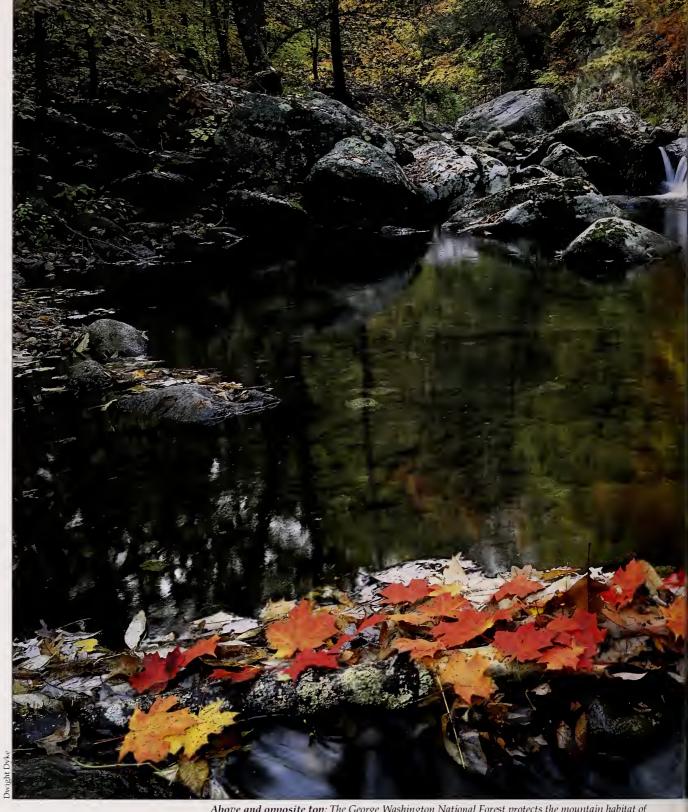




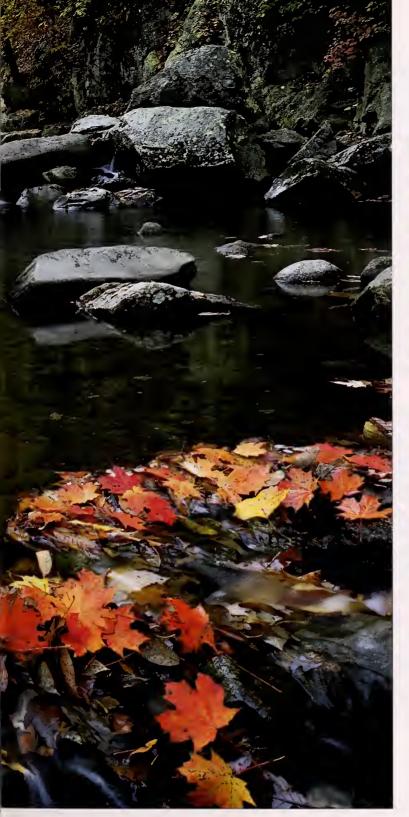
Top: Blue Ridge Parkway. **Above:** Augusta County finery. **Right:** Shenandoah County apple trees covered in the blossoms of spring. **Opposite:** Shenandoah National Park—gem of the Valley and full of native trout streams.







Above and opposite top: The George Washington National Forest protects the mountain habitat of the Valley, and provides unparalleled public hunting and trout fishing opportunities for over 4 million people a year. Opposite: Harry Murray of Edinburg.



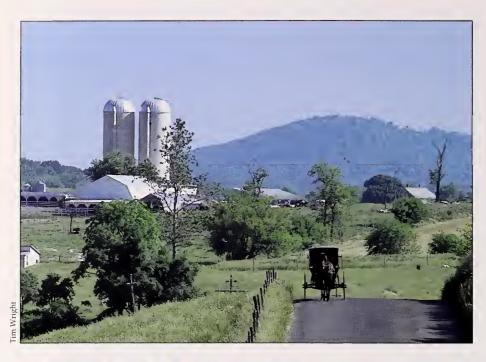




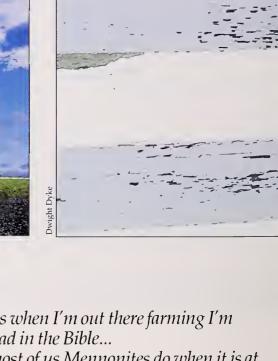


hen I get over in the Shenandoah National Park, and I've walked up in there many, many miles, and I've fished all day, and had a good day, and come walking out, I feel very, very close to God."

— Harry Murray, age 50, Edinburg (Shenandoah County)







Top: Old Order Mennonites drive in horse and buggy to church in Rockingham County. Above: "Speedy" rests harnessed to buggy at Adin Wenger's farm in Rockingham County. Above right: Valley winters can often turn white and harsh, testing the best of man and beast. Opposite: A text for all to read who enter the Bar-B-Q Ranch outside of Harrisonburg.

there's lots of times when I'm out there farming I'm thinking about things I read in the Bible...
"Farming is what most of us Mennonites do when it is at all possible. That's what we try to do, is farm. We're more as a family then."

—Adin Wenger, age 50, Dayton (Rockingham County)





n Sunday afternoons, we'd go around hiking, take a bicycle ride, go down along the muddy crick and look for all kinds of signs for groundhog and muskrat holes we could trap in the winter. We'd swim awhile. Do some fishing, more so then than now, by far..."

— Adin Wenger, Dayton







by Tim Wright



din Wenger sits at an old kitchen table in the spacious basement of his newly built home. With his hat off, Adin's thinning hair is plainly visible. His vision often re-

clasped upon the table.

treats to his hands as they rest

Adin is a dairy farmer and an Old Order Mennonite. And while the Valley is filled with Mennonites, the Old Order is a diminutive contingent concentrated near Harrisonburg.

While they are a small part of the Valley, they help to define it. It's hard

for me to think of the Valley without picturing a horse-drawn carriage sporting its triangular warning sign as it makes its way through the winding old farm roads of the area.

On a spring Sunday morning that is matchless in beauty, I pass by Adin's church. The building sits high on a hill overlooking miles and miles of picture-perfect farms. The churchyard is almost overflowing with horses attached to black, handbuilt carriages. And in the street, as the worship service continues inside, traffic crawls to a stop as cars with out-of-state license plates clog the road, disgorging camcorder-toting tourists seeking to document these "quaint" people who live without cars, radios and T.V.

Despite all the time we spend together, Adin firmly refuses my request to take his picture. When I re-



spond that I will respect his wishes, he seems to take measure of my sin-

22



Opposite page (clockwise from top): Bells Valley United Methodist Church near Goshen in Rockbridge County. Mennonite buggy (Rockingham County). Photographer Tim Wright of Richmond. This page. Afton Chapel, Afton (left). Rockingham County kitten (below).

cerity through my eyes. He says that Old Order Mennonites take no pictures, so they have no snapshots, no wedding or birthday pictures. "We don't even have a camera!" His people believe that to allow pictures of themselves is to "put on a show" and, as Adin put it, they have better things to do.

The tape recorder, running out of tape, snaps itself off. Almost immediately Adin relaxes...just a little. He apologizes over and over, saying he is sorry that he couldn't answer my questions any better. He keeps repeating, "I'm just not worthy enough to answer your questions." Over and over, I reassure him that he did just fine. But deep down, I feel a sense of disappointment, for here is a man who is sensitive, intelligent and undoubtedly rich with thought and feeling, and I can't overcome his genuine modesty to pull that richness from him.

We spend another 15 or 20 minutes chatting, and the whole time I wish I could put in a new tape because Adin is slowly returning to

the man I know he is. We adjourn to the kitchen where he insists that we have some of his wife's freshly baked cake. Sitting around the kitchen table eating and chatting, Adin's transformation is complete. All the things I wanted to hear come pouring forth in a torrent too fast for me to commit to memory. It's such a precious moment that I don't dare interrupt it by going for the tape recorder or a notepad.

Several weeks later, I return to Adin's home. Although he won't let me take his portrait, he agrees to let his horse "Speedy," hooked up to the buggy, stand in his place. While rolling around on the ground trying to find that perfect angle, I realize from Adin's teasing comments that he has become as fascinated of me as I of him.

With the photo session completed, Adin insists on taking me for a ride in the buggy. Sitting side by side, we bounce down the gravel driveway toward the road. Three days of low rain clouds have just given way to a deep blue sky punctuated by streaming wisps of fastmoving clouds. The sun shines bright in our eyes as I look out at Adin's farm over Speedy's ears, his head turning from side to side as he trots along.

If I never see Adin again, I will always think of him as a friend. And I think he feels the same. \square



FEBRUARY 1994 23 This page: Authentic working farms at the American Museum of Frontier Culture in Staunton depict the life of many of the Valley's ancestors from Germany, Northern Ireland, and England before they emigrated to the U.S. in the 18th century. The Ulster farm of the Scotch-Irish is pictured here.

Opposite: Cyrus McCormick Farm in Steeles Tavern (right) is the site where the famous Scotch-Irish inventor, born in 1809, revolutionized agriculture with the invention of the reaper. Far right, top: Charles Howdyshell, Jr. of Newport in Augusta County is typical of Valley residents who cherish their hunting heritage. He is a member of the National Muzzleloading Rifle Association and American Mountain Men, and is also a Virginia Hunter Education Instructor. Far right, bottom: From apple cider to "cidersicles," one is never far from an apple in the Valley, especially in Old Town Winchester.



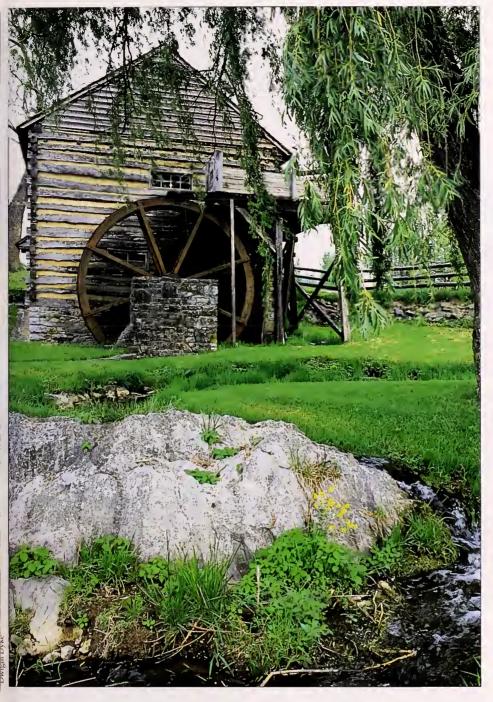




Connie Spitzer of Harrisonburg; photo by Tim Wright.



ou know, the Valley is changing now and I guess maybe it means more to me and other people, too....The memories I have from my childhood are gone. Drawing water from the well, and having grandparents that lived that way in a house that didn't have electricity or running



there is such a strong sense of continuity in this Valley, it's something I hope we don't lose. It's something that I wish everyone could have, a place like this to go to."

— Connie Spitzer, Harrisonburg





water,...that was a way of life—basically living off hard work...and it's gone. And I'm so thankful that I have those memories. I'm thankful that I have this place. I'm thankful that this is my home."

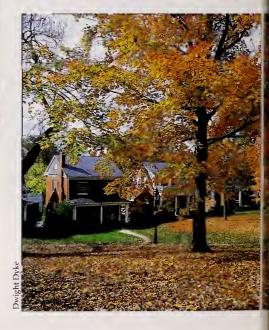
— Connie Spitzer, age 36, Harrisonburg

FEBRUARY 1994 25



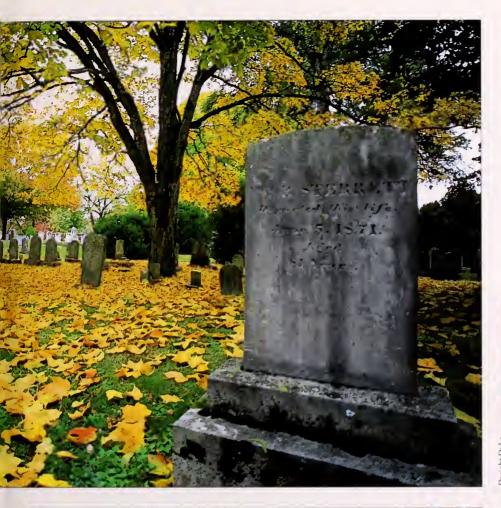






use the woods a lot to go think, especially on my grandfather's old farm. When I get sick of school or whatever is going on, I take off and walk up in the woods by myself and sit there and think things through. It's a lot quieter and not as much is going on. It gives you a chance to step back and look at things."

— John Campbell, age 21 VMI senior



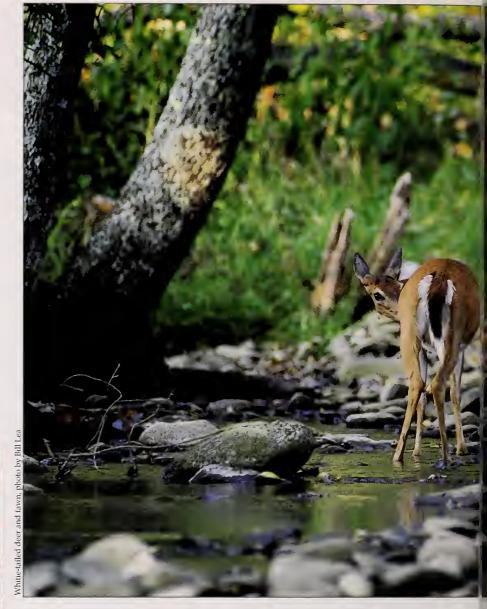






Clockwise from top left of opposite page: VMI cadet Richard Gordon in Lexington. Stonewall Jackson Memorial Cemetery in Lexington. Mary Baldwin College in Staunton. Woodrow Wilson Birthplace in Staunton. Washington and Lee University in Lexington (two photos). VMI cadet John Campbell in Lexington.

FEBRUARY 1994 27





Wildlife veterinarian Stuart Porter of Augusta County (above) heads up the center of wildlife rehabilitation in the state at the Wildlife Center in Weyers Cave. **Top far right:** Wildlife rehabilitator feeds mourning dove. **Above far** right: Orphaned black bear cub.

e learn from these animals. We look at the causes of the problems that we see in the animals and relate them to what is going on in the environment. These animals are sentinels of the environment. If people are bringing me 10 sick bluejays, there's probably another 100 out there that people aren't finding."

-Dr. Stuart Porter, Augusta County







can remember years ago, some deer hunters spent half a day tracking us down to bring us a deer they found caught in a fence. I said, 'Why didn't you shoot it?' And the guys said, 'because that wouldn't have been sporting.' These guys were real sportsmen."

—Dr. Stuart Porter, Augusta County

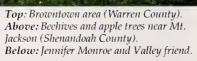




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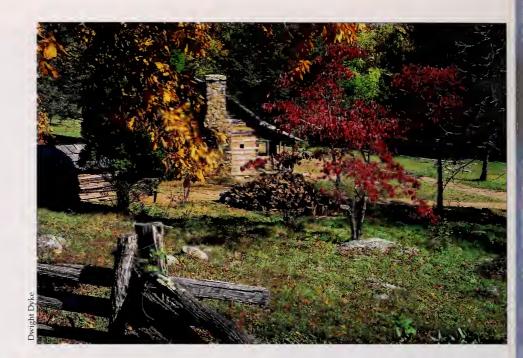
Center: Shenandoah National Park. Top: Fishing on Sherando Lake in Augusta County. Above: Jesse Labadie of Augusta County.

ometimes when I'm just not feeling like anybody cares about me, I go for a walk by myself. We have a river right by our house. And sometimes I just walk down by the river and look at all the things down there. And sometimes it makes me feel all better."

—Jesse Labadie, age 9, Augusta County

FEBRUARY 1994 31





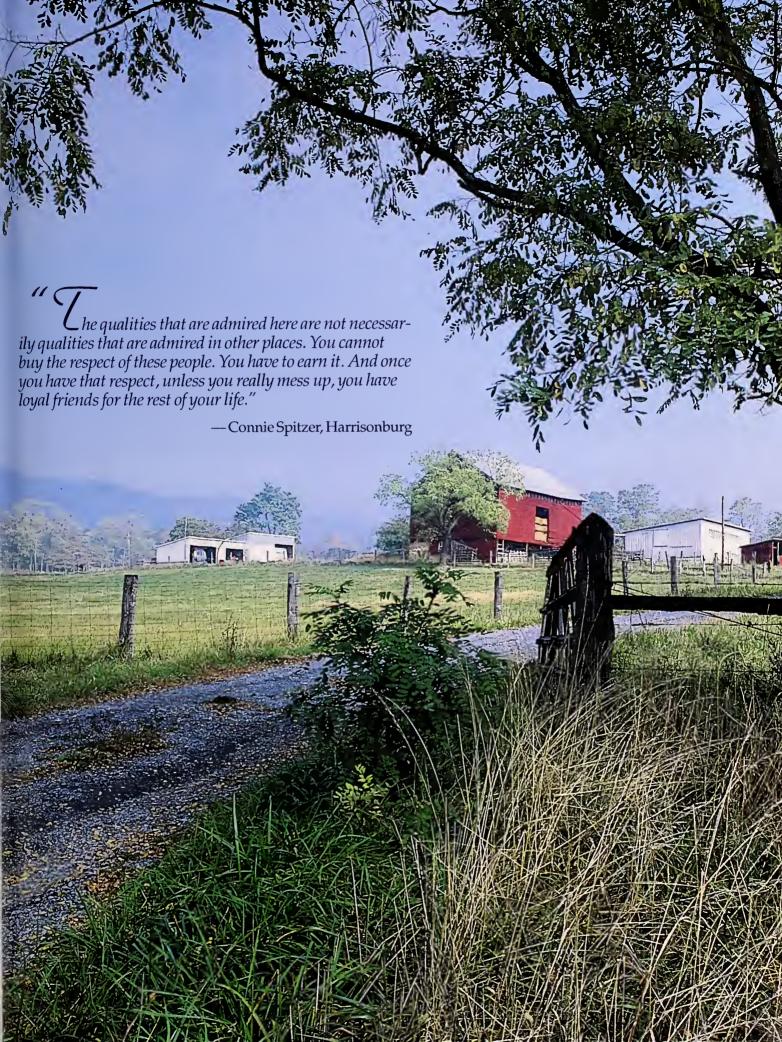


Tim Wright

Above: Molly Grunmeier of Winchester. Top: Old settler's cabin off the Blue Ridge Parkway. Right: Covered bridge near Mt. Jackson in Shenandoah County. Opposite: St. Luke area in Shenandoah County.



'm always amazed...when we're hiking. You think about the history of what has been going on for hundreds and hundreds of years. I guess it just puts things in perspective."





The Shenandoah Valley

A Photographer's Perspective

by Dwight Dyke

irginia's Shenandoah Valley is a sparkling example of nature doing it right. Physically separated

by the Blue Ridge Mountains from the rest of the Commonwealth, the Valley is unique. Its people, who rarely move away; its soil, a rich limestone that assures

bounty; its



beauty that is truly world class—all give credence to the Indian name "Shenandoah"—Clear Eyed Daughter of the Stars.

Long time natives, of which there are many, will tell you that there are two valleys—upper and lower Shenandoah. Since by definition the valley is the watershed of the Shenandoah River and since the river flows from southwest to north-



east, the upper valley lies to the south and the lower valley to the north. Although this confounds many map-reading Yankees, it is quite logical when explained by the slightly smiling residents.

As you travel the back roads and farm lanes, it becomes not only logical but self-evident that there really are two valleys. The northern, or lower valley, still has ample evidence of its transplanted Tidewater planter forebears and German immigrants. The upper valley, settled by Scotch-Irish and others, may not be quite so tidy, but has an easygoing charm of its own. North or south, upper or lower, it is a photographer's dream.

To experience the beauty of the Valley, come in the spring when the land awakes and explodes with blossoms. Apple trees blossom in the many orchards, laurel and dogwoods blossom in the forests, hugging the mountain slopes that define the valley. Flowers blossom ev-

erywhere.

Or make it summer. It's usually cooler here with gentle breezes washing down from the mountains. Wildflowers abound and follow fencerows to claim almost every inch of untilled land.

Or come in the fall when the sky turns a bright, clear blue, and red maple trees frame old stone farmhouses and neat white churches. Old barns stand sturdy by yellow persimmon trees. Dark red dogwoods show off their berries and mark paths through the forests.

But you must not miss the Valley in winter after a gentle snowfall. See the farmhouses from a field of white with the mountains starkly outlined under a cobalt blue sky. Or walk in the quiet forests by a stream cascading down from the mountains, looking like a black ribbon casually draped on the white landscape.

Whatever the season, the Valley shares its beauty gracefully and generously. The Shenandoah Valley is a treasure right at our doorstep.

34



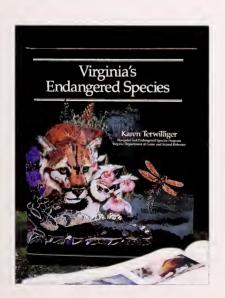
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